INCREASING PAME AND FORTUNE. (Continued from last week's issue.) out to him !

requested, and Merelli, having his own ob- beautiful Strepponi blushingly replied : ject in view, and carefully weighing every "Then, Sir, I shall expect you to follow

regard as the strongest illiretto I have ever mediately to Merelli, tell him that you ac seen, and yet our celebrated Professor, cept his offer and that you will agree Nicolai, to whom I have shown it, declares write the opera for the same price which that it cannot be put to music. Won't you Bellini received for his 'Norma,'" (about see ?"-And then quickly, in response to 9,000f.) "These are my i structions, go and Verdi's gesture of dissent : "No, no ; do carry them out." not misunderstand me. I do not ask you to "But," hesitated Verdi, "is the price not do any work in the matter, but simply as my | soo high? I would not like to-" friend to take the poem home, read it, and "No buts, I will have no buts," interrupt tell me what you think might be done with ed the prima donna. "Go at once and do as it." To this Verdi readily consented, and I have advised you."

kind I have ever seen."

all about his resolutions never to write again C., in the New York Times. for the stage. He forgot everything but his God-given art. He knew only that he must put into shape and form the thousand grand fancies, the melodies, the strong harmontous sounds which crowded upon tism, lawyers, physicians, clergymen-all him. For hours he never left the piano. use it." - Cincinnati (Ohio) Daily Enquirer. He worked through many a night, often till Merelli, and told him that the opera was produced until the Spring season. At that got it. time, however-to be exact, on March 9, 1842-after much preparation; and with then more than a passing interest in the ouce. rising young musician. At this, time, as in later years, this greatest singer of her day did very much to advance the fortunes of Verdi. But this is a digression. The opera was a complete-an instantaneous-success. Donizetti, who heard it three times in succession, was so charmed with it that he could not get the music out of his head. So charmed that some days later, while in a

stage coach on his way to Bologna, he was continually heard to hum its principal airs, and to exclaim from time to time : "E bello! B bellissimo! Brayo, Verdi!" And well might the old master exclaim "Brave," for success of "Nabucco" had the almost immediate effect of placing the name of Verdi in the same list with those of Mercadante, Pacini, Luigi Ricci, and even Donlzetti himself. Nor was this all. Verdi was to gain fortune as well as fame by his success. The managers of La Scala had sense enough to know upon which side their bread was buttered. They were quick to see that Verdi was destined to be one of the greatest of favorites with the Italian public. and after it was assured that "Nabucco" had succeeded beyond a doubt they boldly offered him an ouportunity to write "L'opera d'obligo"-that is to say, the new opera which inder an ancient and time-honored custom they were obliged to give at the commencement of each season.

When this proposition was made to Verdi be was dumbfounded. "L'opera d'obligo!" ne cried, "L'opera d'obligo! No no it is of much; I must not think of undertaking

But you must, you must," insisted Signor Merelli, who had been intrusted to make the negotiations with him. "You shall have your own terms. Ask any price you like, but the opera you must write." "At least let me have time to think,

nervously exclaimed Verdi. "No no you must not think or you may refuse," insisted the director, "We must have the opera-vou must write it, and there the matter engs."

trouble i musician, "of course any argument Augusta, Maine.

VERDI'S FIRST GREAT WORK of mine would be useless, Wait only a few saying which he burried to the house of h ITS COMPOSITION AND ITS IMMEDIATE PASSIONATE DEVOTION OF THE ARTIST TO THE as he entered out of breath, "I have had an EXECUTION OF HIS WORK-THE OPERA'S COM- offer at my own terms to write 'Liopera PLETE SUCCESS-DONIZETTI'S ADMIRATION- d'obligo, and Merelli insists that I shall do

"And of course you have accepted Merelli had not long to wait for his op- offer," said the quick-witted prima donna, portunity. One day, as he stood in front of displaying no surprise at the announcement the theatre, he saw Verdi passing, and cried which in reality astonished her a good deal

Verdi, Verdi, wait a moment; you are "No, not yet. I came first to see you and the very man I ment want to see. Come in- ask your advice as to terms," said Vereli, to to my office." The macetro did as he was which truly complimentary speech the

my advice and obey my instructions to the "I am in despair. Here I have what I letter. They are as follows: Go back im-

True to his promise, he hastened to care- back to the theatre, found the director, and fully read it. He was at once struck with told him his terms. They were accepted at the grandeur, the majesty, of the subject. once, and a contract signed within the hour. He read on and on ; then rushed to the piano, The result was the production on the 11th of and in music spoke the words of the drama February, 1843, of "I Lombardi." It was over and over again. All night long he sat played before an audience which had waited and read and played. The bright morning for admittance to the theatre from 3 o'clock sublight came, and still he read and played in the afternoon. Its success was complete on until at last utterly exhausted, but with and overwhelming. Certain political althe words and music still ringing in his lusions which were contained in the text, brain, he fell asteep. But not to sleep long. and which were objected to by the Austrian In a few hours he walked excitedly into the rulers of the country, made it all the more office of his friend Merelli, and, without a popular with the Italians, and among them word of preface, blurted out : "It is wonder- everywhere it became a prime favorite. It has not only remained so, but has ever since You mean the libretto?" asked Merelli, continued to extend its fame. In Brussels, Yes, of course," continued Verdi, still for instance, it was played 26 times during with great excitement, "what else could I the season of 1879, and each time to largmean? It is wonderful, wonderful-the sudiences and increased appla ise. It has most profound and thoughtful work of the also been performed frequently in Paris and elsewhere under the title of "Jeru alem."

Then you will set it to music-you will The great and lasting triumph of "Lommake an opera of it?" eagerly asked the di- bardi, 'following the success of "Nabucco,' at once placed Verdi at the head of the first "No, no, do not ask me-" "But you of living Italian composers. Indeed, he was must, you must; you dare not hide your from this time on regarded as leading them talents as you have been doing," interrupted all except the author of "Lucia" and "Don Merelli with enthusiasm: "You wrong Pasquale," and as being at least side by side your friends, you wrong yourself, you wrong with him. Nor was his fame to stop here. Italy, by continuing your present course. Every great theatre in Italy clamored for the You must compose, you must let yourself privilege of producing an quiginal opera be heard. You are a child to refuse: you from his pen, and in comparatively quick know not your own interest; we must show succession there were produced "Ernan". it to you," saving which he forced the lib- "I Due Poscari," "Glovannad Arco," and retto into Verdi's hand and pushed him out "Alzira." Of these the greate t, "Emani," of the theatre with the words, "You have was produced for the first time in Venice and was a success, though not so g eat a or e Half bewildered, yet not displeased, with as "Lombardi." The writer of the libretto what had occurred, Verdi hurried back to of this opera was the unfortance Piave, his piano. He was full of his subject. The who was subsequently supported through music in his soul must have vent. He forgot years of sickness by the bounty of Verdi .- 11.

(To be Continued.)

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the sun was high. He thought neither of A bright youth, undergoing examination a meat, drink, nor sleep. In less than three slew days since for admission to one of the demonths his first great work-"Nabucodono. partments, found himself confronted with the sor" ("Nabucco")—was ready for the stage. | question, "What is the distance from the earth With it he hastened to the theatre, found to the sun?" Not having the exact number of miles with him he wrote in reply: "I am unable to state accurately, but don't believe the sun is finished. The director was delighted, regretting only that the work could not be ance of my duties if I get this clerkship." He

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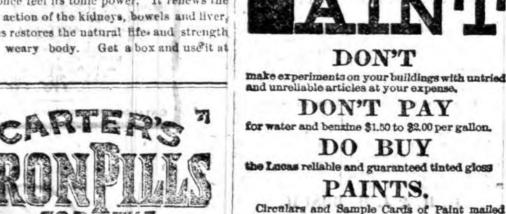
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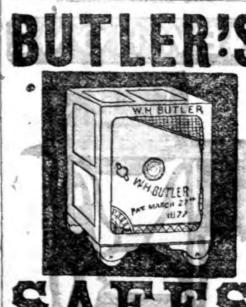
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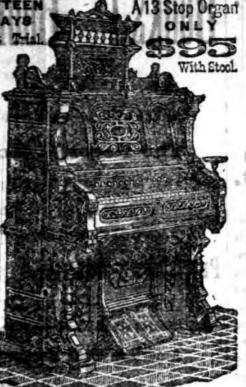


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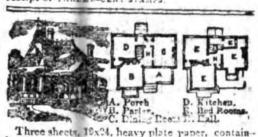
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